

SEEING THE STARS IN HOLLYWOOD

By Dan and Don



RAMON'S FIRST ACTING WAS AT THE AGE OF SIX



HE ARRIVED IN LOS ANGELES WITH TEN DOLLARS



AND GOT A JOB SINGING IN A RESTAURANT



THEN HE WAS GIVEN THE TITLE ROLE IN "OMAR KHAYYAM"



NOW HE'S FAMOUS, BOTH AS AN ACTOR AND A SINGER IN THE TALKERS

By DAN THOMAS

HOLLYWOOD, Calif., Aug. 31.—A survey of the foreign population in Hollywood's film colony might reveal that one of the biggest contributors has been our own neighboring republic of Mexico.

Quite a few Mexicans are now numbered among the most successful screen stars and not the least successful by any means is Ramon Novarro, born in Durango, Mexico, on February 6, 1900, as Ramon Samienegos.

Ramon's first attempt at acting was made when he was only six years old. The occasion was a

pageant he and his sisters gave in honor of their grandmother's birthday. Two years later his father gave him a little marionette set with which he staged many plays.

In 1913 the revolution against Alfonso de la Huerta closed the school in Durango, and the Samienegos family moved to Mexico City. It was there that Ramon started military training—a thing which he never liked. He had been an ardent student of music ever since he had been old enough to go to school, and he wavered between following music or the priesthood for his career.

Then Fate stepped in and saw to it that he didn't follow either. The family fortune wiped out by the revolution, Ramon and his brother, Mariano, came to the United States, where they hoped to some day accumulate the wealth their father had lost. They arrived in Los Angeles with \$10 between them, but before that had completely vanished Ramon got a job singing in a restaurant. Then he appeared on the stage in New York in a dancing act.

At the close of this engagement, Ramon returned to Los Angeles, still seeking a musical career. Pre-

vious to this time he had done some extra work in the movies. He met Ferdinand Pinney Earle, who was just getting ready to film his "Omar Khayyam." Earle saw possibilities in the young Mexican and gave him the title role. Ramon's work in that picture attracted the attention of Rex Ingram, who was then directing at the old Metro studio. Ingram decided that in the young boy he had a potential star and gave him a prominent role in "The Prisoner of Zenda." It was when he started this picture that Ramon changed his name from Samienegos to Novarro.

Following "The Prisoner of Zenda" he was given leading roles in "Trifling Women," "Where the Pavement Ends," "Scaramouche" and "The Arab."

However, even with the success he was having in pictures, Novarro still dreamed of the day when he could become an opera singer. Not more than a year ago he told me that he was just waiting for the day when he would be able to give up his film career and devote his time to music.

Then the talkies came along and he was able to partially satisfy his lifelong ambition and at the same

time continue the work which has made him famous throughout the world. He now sings at least one song in each of his films.

It was about four years ago that Novarro was elevated to stardom, his first picture under his new contract being "Ben Hur," which still stands as the most expensive film ever produced.

Ramon is so interested in music that when he built a new home a few years ago he had a completely equipped little theater constructed right in it. Here he often stages concerts for a small group of his closest friends.

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HOLLYWOOD, Calif., Sept. 14.—There are several towns scattered about these United States which proclaim Jack Oakie a "home town product." Perhaps all of them are justified in their claims, because Jack did quite a lot of moving around before he finally settled in our movie village about two years ago.

However, first to bask in Jack's reflected cinema glories is Sedalia, Mo. Jack was born in Sedalia, but he couldn't tell you the first thing about the town today. His family moved to Muskogee, Okla., when

he was only four years old. Consequently Jack sort of thinks of Muskogee as his home town. That's where his boyhood was spent from the time he was old enough to remember until he was 15.

Jack attended Jefferson Grammar school in Muskogee, but in those days he still used his right name, Lewis Affield. His mother owned a girls' school there, but Jack, or Lewis, used to stay as far away from it as possible. He didn't care much about girls in those days. How time does change a man!

When Oakie was 15 he moved to Kansas City, where he completed his education in the Central high school. After his graduation his mother had to go to New York to attend to some business, so she took him with her.

"All the way to New York I dreamed of becoming a wealthy stock and bond broker, with never a thought of the stage," Oakie declares. "I started out on Wall street as a telephone clerk, but Wall street proved entirely too fast for me. One of my bosses was the entertainment director of

a New York society club which was going to put on a show and he insisted that I do a dance in it.

"It was in that show that I met May Leslie, who was staging the dances. Shortly after this affair she started casting for the Junior League charity show, in which she wanted me to dance. In this show I met Lulu McConnell, the famous vaudeville dancer. I liked Lulu and she liked me, so she asked me to be her partner in an act she was getting up.

"We trouped together for six years and then I began to tire of

the racket. I felt that I was getting in a rut. That was just about the time that Lindbergh made his flight to Paris. Spurred on by his example of taking a chance, I decided to take a chance with Hollywood and the movies."

Jack didn't know a single person when he arrived in the film hamlet, but that didn't bother him in the least. He had never had trouble before in making friends and didn't see why he should here. His first break in pictures came from Wesley Ruggles, who gave him a small bit in "Finder's Keep-

ers," in which he was directing Laura LaPlante at the time.

His next picture was with Clara Bow in "The Fleet's In." Oakie did some mighty good work in that picture—so good, in fact, that he was given a long-term contract by Paramount. Since that eventful day when he put his name on the dotted line he has been more than kept busy, having played in eight pictures.

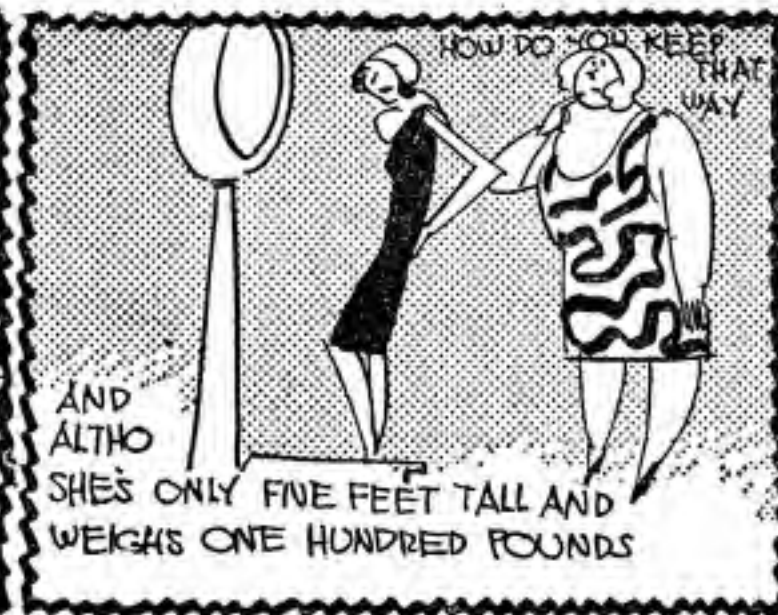
Jack is a good comedian and one of these days you may see him playing in his own production.

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MARION
NIXON



HOLLYWOOD, Sept. 28.—If a small-time vaudeville company hadn't run out of funds and fallen to pieces in Los Angeles a few years ago, it is quite possible that the moving picture world would never have gained the services of pretty Marion Nixon.

Marion had the ill-luck to be a member of that unfortunate troupe. She was dumped, flat broke, into the none too cordial arms of Hol-

lywood—and, as they say, now look at her!

She's famous now, and she has won a secure position; but for a time, just after that company went under, things looked pretty black for her.

It all started like this—but first, perhaps, we'd better go back and get the beginnings.

Marion was born in Superior, Wis., on Sept. 20, 1906. As she

reached her mid 'teens, she went to Minneapolis to finish her education, and while there decided to take a whirl at the stage.

Eventually she made connections with a vaudeville troupe. Her part wasn't especially big—she was, in fact, a member of a girls' chorus. The company went on tour, and got by until it reached Los Angeles. There, as mentioned above, it went broke.

Marion went to Hollywood to see if she could find anything to do in the movies. She had to make the usual rounds of the studios, and after the customary rebuffs and discouragements was promised the part of an "extra" at Warner Brothers.

This was in 1924. The opening wasn't very big, but Marion made the most of it, and before long she was getting bigger parts.

For a time she appeared in Mack Sennett comedies. Then her first big advancement came when she was assigned to play the feminine lead in "Big Dan." After that she was kept busy.

The list of pictures in which she appeared is too long to give here, but it included such films as "Riders of the Purple Sage," "Out All Night," "Out of the Ruins" and "Broadway Bound."

Now Marion's sitting on the world. She's playing opposite Al Jolson in "Say It With Songs"—and that's about as high as any ambitious young extra girl would dream of trying to climb. On top of it, however, she is getting ready to appear opposite John Barrymore in his first talkie, "General Crack."

For a big star, Marion is tiny. She's just five feet tall and she weighs just 100 pounds.

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MARY BEGAN HER CAREER AT AGE OF 7 WASHING STOCKINGS



RAN AWAY TO NEW YORK AND BECAME A MODEL



ENTERED MOTION PICTURE CAREER IN GERMANY



HER FIRST ROLE WITH UNITED ARTISTS WAS IN "TOPSY AND EVA"



NOW SHE HAS A LONG TERM CONTRACT WITH UNIVERSAL

HOLLYWOOD, Cal., Oct. 5.—When Mary Nolan was 7 years old the nuns of St. Joseph's convent gave her a soap box to stand on because she was too small to reach the large basin where twice a week she washed 500 pairs of stockings for other girls in the convent. That wasn't a very auspicious start for a girl whose name was destined to be flashed around the world while she was still in her twenties. But it didn't bother Mary in the least. That was her lot and she made the best of it.

Orphaned at the age of 3, she was taken into the convent, being one of 10 girls who had to earn their own way. Throughout her childhood she longingly watched the more fortunate girls playing in the yard while she performed various duties which included washing stockings, setting tables and dusting furniture. She worked her way through the convent until she was 14 years old and then went to live with her married sister in Worcester, Mass. When Mary went to live with her

sister her grandmother sent her \$10 every week. She was very poor and thought that the girl should find work quickly and pay the money back. But the girl had other plans. So she kept her weekly allowance, and with the aid of her brother, who gave her \$50, ran away to New York to look for a career. When she arrived in New York she didn't know what to do so she started riding around the city on street cars. Arthur Brown saw her, learned of her predicament and took her to his home. After Mrs.

Brown had dressed her in a beautiful gown, Arthur realized that she would make a perfect model. So Imogene Wilson, artist's model and actress, was born. For several years Imogene modeled for New York's leading artists. Then she broke into musical comedy and sang and danced in several Broadway revues. It was while she was dancing that she became involved in a scandal which swept the country. Mrs. Frank Tinney sued her husband, a prominent actor, for

divorce, naming Imogene as the "other woman." While newspapers were still carrying the actress' name in headlines, she went to Germany and entered upon her motion picture career. She had starred in 14 pictures when Joseph Schenck saw a photograph of her and offered her a job with United Artists. Her first role at that studio was in "Topsy and Eva," but when the film was released every foot of her had been cut out. That was when Imogene chang-

ed her name to Mary Nolan. She wanted to start over again and forget her past and she wanted others to forget it. As Mary Nolan she played an important role in "Sorrell and Son." Then Universal signed her to a long contract. Now Mary has achieved her greatest desire. Her past has practically been forgotten. And she has made good on her second start, having just completed her first starring vehicle, "The Shanghai Lady."

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HOLLYWOOD, Calif., Oct. 14—From newsboy to bank president. How often have you read such stories? Plenty, I'll venture, because they aren't uncommon. But from newsie to film star is something else again. Now that the step is any more unusual. It's just that these celluloid celebrities don't like to talk about the time they were "nobodies." They want to live in the present. Harry Gribbon is one man who doesn't look at life that way. When

he was nine years old he was selling papers on a Bowery street corner. And he's proud of the fact. Harry was born in New York about 1885, the son of wealthy parents. When he was seven he enjoyed everything money could furnish. Two years later he was selling papers to help support the family. His father had lost all of his money. He also took flings at driving milk wagons and delivering groceries. As he grew older he started sing-

ing in night clubs after disposing of his papers. Then he joined a stock company but didn't stay with it long. All the time he was experimenting in the various fields of money making, Harry's grandfather tutored him in English and mathematics. And he did such a good job of it that at the age of 15 the boy was an expert accountant for a large insurance company. But office work didn't agree with Harry's ideas of life. So a year later he turned toward the stage,

joining the vaudeville team of Heelan and Helf. He went from that job to others until 1913 when he secured a job in the Ziegfeld Follies. Gribbon's first trip west of the Mississippi was some years ago, when he came to Los Angeles with George M. Cohan's "The Red Widow" company to play in a local theatre. Mack Sennett, then comedy king of the movies, signed him to a five-year contract at that time.

"And a few days later I signed it I wished I hadn't," Gribbon remarks. "I had to go to San Francisco with the show before I could make my bow in pictures. For some reason they seemed to like me up there and wanted me to stay at any salary I named. But I already had this contract with Sennett." After spending five years on the Sennett lot, Harry again went back on the stage, doing a headline vaudeville act for three years with his wife, May Emory.

About three years ago he returned to Hollywood again to renew his film career. His first job was in "Chinatown Charlie" with Johnny Hines. Then he went to Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer for a number of pictures. Last spring Sennett again signed him, this time to a long-term starring contract. Since then he has made seven two-reelers for Sennett and has done two pictures for Warners between times.